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Cotton Textile Workers Gain Raises But Pay Is Still Low

The cotton-textile worker is still among the lowest paid in American industry in spite of substantial wartime wage increases. Average hourly earnings rose from 38.4 cents in April 1939 to 62.4 cents in April 1944—62.5 percent. Eliminating extra pay for overtime the increase was from 38.4 cents to 60 cents—56.3 percent. Average hourly earnings of northern mills exceeded those of southern mills by 21 percent in April 1939 and 20 percent in April 1944.

The differential has been reduced slightly since March 1944 due partly to wage orders permitting wage increases in the South. The effect of wage change differs between areas within regions—because of varying hours of work, products manufactured, bidding for working force by other industries, and other economic pressures.

Average hourly earnings in 18 wage areas in the North reported increases ranging from 0.6 cent to 7.1 cents; in 48 southern wage areas, the range was an 0.5-cent decrease hourly to a 7.9-cent increase.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary

40-Hour Week, 8-Hour Day Yield Highest Output

Studies of long working hours in 12 metalworking plants by the United States Department of Labor indicate that the 40-hour week and 8-hour day generally yield highest output for each hour worked. Hours beyond 40 or 48 a week resulted in additional output—but at constantly decreasing efficiency and with increasing absenteeism as hours were stepped up. On light work employees under wage incentive systems and with weekly schedules ranging between 55 and 58 added approximately 2 hours of output for every 3 hours worked above 48. In heavy work, the ratio was more nearly 1 hour's output for every additional 2 hours worked. Another point illustrated by the survey is that the 7-day week, as a steady program is uneconomic and may actually result in less production than the 6-day week.

Among the plants studied, the operations varied from foundry and forge-shop to bench operations which required the processing of metal parts weighing as little as 1 ounce. There was no intention to study metalworking operations exclusively; it simply happened that long working hours were found most frequently in these industries.

The material worked, however—whether metal, or wood, or leather, or paper, or any other substance—is of no great significance. Given the same types of exertion requirements, control over speed, and wage incentives, the work performance under the same hours—schedules will probably follow much the same patterns.

The survey makes clear that there is no such thing as an "optimum hour schedule" for all of industry. What appears to be a satisfactory schedule of hours for a plant with light machining operations may be economically wasteful in a foundry. Further, there is a marked difference in the performance of men working under wage incentives and those working at straight hourly rates without any kind of wage incentive.

Much depends on the type of work and the requirements it exacts from workers, the degree to which workers can control the speed of operations, and the incentives which motivate them—whether in the volume of pay, participation in the war effort, labor relations, or working conditions generally.

The primary effect of lengthening of daily hours for workers on the day shift, when the 5-day week is maintained, is to wipe out the midweek spurt. The analysis of daily production patterns in several plants under a 40- or 48-hour schedule shows a building up of hourly efficiencies toward a peak on the third and fourth days of the week, with a slight drop thereafter. When daily hours were lengthened to 9½ or more, however, this peak disappeared.

The production curve for the successive days of the week flattened out, and any one day was about as good as any other day. When a sixth day was added, the line of production remained flat, but dropped to a lower level. The data indicate clearly that workers adjust themselves to longer hours by slowing down, not because they want to, but because they have to.

For workers on the second or night shift, the pattern is somewhat different. Their daily efficiency performance under the 8-hour day and 5-day week looks much like that of the day shift on the 10-hour day. There is practically no midweek spurt and production tends to flatten into a fairly level line.

The reason for this appears to be that these workers are somewhat tired when they come to work, having been up for some hours and probably at work around home. In any case, they are not so refreshed when they come on the job as the men on the day shift who have their leisure hours after, not before, the day's work.

When a sixth day is added to stretch the week to 58 or 60 hours, the result is likely to be a steady decline in the efficiency level, day after day, with the peak points on Monday or Tuesday, at the very beginning of the week.

Impaired Workers Show High Efficiency on Jobs

Industry has hired considerable numbers of physically impaired workers primarily because of acute wartime manpower shortage. The consensus among 300 employers reporting to the United States Department of Labor was that physically impaired—when placed in suitable jobs—are as efficient as unimpaired workers; their absenteeism, injury frequency, and labor turn-over records are generally superior.

Some jobs are performed better by impaired workers than by unimpaired, such as sorting bolts, rivets, etc., by the blind and employing deaf workers in extremely noisy shops. Chief problem is decreased flexibility of manufacturing processes due to difficulty of transferring impaired workers between jobs. Employment of impaired workers is limited in heavy or hazardous work.

Where a small plant considers an elaborate personnel department too costly physical requirements of each job can still be analyzed, and applicants examined by a competent industrial physician to supply necessary information to place the impaired satisfactorily. Many of the larger plants use job analysis in the proper placement of impaired workers. Eighty-seven percent of the 63,382 impaired workers employed in these establishments were reported to be just as efficient as the unimpaired doing similar work, and the 8 percent reported as more efficient outweighed the 5 percent reported as less efficient.

While 44 percent of the impaired workers were reported as having an absentee record no worse than their fellow workers, 49 percent had better records. Only 7 percent were absent more than the unimpaired. According to the reports, the physically handicapped workers generally experienced fewer accidents, for 38 percent were reported as having just as good an accident record, and 51 percent a better record than the workers without disabilities; 11 percent had a higher injury-frequency rate. Similarly, job changes were less frequent among them, with 31 percent reported as having a turn-over record comparable to that of the unimpaired and 58 percent a better record. A higher rate of turnover was reported for 11 percent of these workers.

Frequently advanced as a reason for the better absenteeism and labor turn-over records of the impaired workers is the fact that, as a general rule, the handicapped worker has found it much more difficult to get a job than his more fortunate fellow worker and therefore exerts greater efforts to keep it. Further, he is anxious to prove to himself and to others that he is as good as, or better than, his unimpaired fellow worker.

Manufacturing plants in all parts of the country reported that they were utilizing workers with physical impairments. About 46 percent of all these workers were employed in the highly industrialized East North Central area; more than half were working in plants employing 10,000 or more persons.

A majority of the employers stated emphatically that selective placement is the key to their satisfactory employment. Difficulty in transfers from one job to another and in upgrading were reported by some manufacturers employing relatively large numbers of physically handicapped. Special in-service training facilities have been provided in an attempt to solve these problems. The necessity of flexibility in the manufacturing process was cited by a few manufacturers as limiting the number of physically impaired employees that could be utilized.

Some companies are so concerned with the problem of placing returning veterans that they are conducting surveys of the men who have left their plants for military service, to determine the new skills acquired and the type of work each man desires to engage in upon his return. Analyzing these replies, together with past records of the men, the employers are earmarking at least three jobs for each returning veteran. One of these jobs is being selected on the supposition that the veteran may return disabled.

In the cities in which two of these companies are situated, finding jobs for the handicapped has been made a community responsibility. Every device has been used to create an awareness among employers of the employability of such persons. Some leaders in the field believe that community interest is one answer to the employment of the physically disabled.

The results so far show that impaired persons have been hired in appreciable numbers, especially in critical labor-market areas and in industries engaged most directly in essential war work. Many of these workers probably will be out of jobs when this work ceases. The position of the handicapped worker may be further weakened by the return of the disabled veterans of World War II who must be absorbed into industry. In order that existing prejudices may be met and overcome and that the performance of impaired workers at jobs at which their disabilities are no handicaps, may be appreciated fully, it is essential that a body of factual, objective data be made available.

Women Make Good on Jobs in Shipyards

Shipyards have added women to their work forces with phenomenal rapidity through the past 2 years. So fast has been this movement that in some respects the yards have failed to make the adjustments needed to fit women to this new environment and enable them to make the most of their abilities. In October 1939 there were reported for the United States only 36 women wage earners in ship and boat building and repair. The introduction of women began in earnest in the fall of 1942 and by January 1943 they were 4 percent of all production wage earners in the industry; a year later they were 10 percent.

The enormous expansion of total employment in the shipyards was the factor making necessary this acceptance of women on so large a scale. Old-established yards that in 1939 and 1940 employed from 3,000 to 10,000 workers had 5 to nearly 8 times as many late in 1943. Some yards for which ground had not even been broken in 1940 employed 20,000 to 40,000 workers in the spring of 1943.

Recognizing that certain problems are sure to arise with so rapid an influx of new workers, the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor visited, in 1943, 35 shipyards that had women on production, analyzed the needs of the situation, and presented recommendations as to conditions which should govern employment of women in this new and difficult field. Careful planning can prevent many problems from arising, or at least can prepare for meeting those that are inevitable. In condensed form, the recommendations that the Women's Bureau makes are as follows:

> Secure the cooperation of men supervisors and workers.
>
> Select and place women carefully.
>
> Employ women only in jobs found to be suitable.
>
> Pay women and upgrade them on the same basis as men.
>
> Schedule an 8-hour day and a 48-hour 6-day week; allow a lunch period of at least 30 minutes, and rest periods of 10 to 15 minutes in each work spell of as much as 4 hours. Rotate shifts no more frequently than every 2 months.
>
> Set up an effective woman employee counselor system.
>
> Give new women workers preliminary induction into the work and environment of the shipyard before putting them on the job.
>
> Provide personal-service, food, and medical facilities that meet approved standards of adequacy and quality.
>
> Study and expand the safety program to adapt it to women workers, and instruct women thoroughly in safe work practice.

It is interesting to contrast the attitude toward women in two yards, each of which probably is typical of a number. In one, women were put into several departments and assigned purposely to some of the more complicated occupations. The company felt that if women were given only menial jobs they would develop an inferiority complex difficult to overcome. Instead they were used to the extent of their ability and strength. Men who were replaced by women were given as good or better jobs, thus assuring their acceptance of women. In another yard women were deliberately given only the simpler jobs and had the prejudice of foremen and men to overcome.

The point where controversy often arises is in the employment of women on the hulls or on board ship. For the most part the work women are doing in these locations is in itself suitable, as welders, burners, sheet-metal workers, electricians, and the like. But the conditions are often trying. Frequently there is exposure to extremes of weather. Such work requires carrying loads while climbing; holding tools and equipment while working on scaffolding; bending, crouching, and kneeling in confined places. Such activity is both hazardous and fatiguing for the average woman. These are the last places to which women should be assigned. When it becomes necessary, they should be most carefully selected and given special orientation for such work. A vocational school in the West, that cooperates with a large woman-employing dry-dock, gives conditioning exercises and training in how to climb ladders and work on scaffolding. This is an excellent introduction.

In general the principle emphasized by the Navy of "equal compensation for equal work irrespective of sex" has been followed. It is found, however, that discrimination is common when it comes to upgrading women or to giving upgraded women the rate for the job. Except for the trade of electric arc welding, case after case could be cited of women working as group leaders or as skilled craftsmen with only a helper's rating, or of resistance on the part of foremen, management, or the unions to allowing women equal opportunity with men for supplementary training, upgrading, and supervisory work.

Nearly a third of the shipyards visited had a regular weekly schedule averaging longer than 48 hours. In 1 the workweek was 60 hours for women; 5 had a 9- or 10-hour day. Three provided no day of rest and in 3 others there were extended periods when this was true. In addition, at least 11 yards with scheduled hours of 48 or less required overtime occasionally, in some cases frequently and for long periods. The data available indicate that the efficiency of the shipyard workers cannot be maintained under long work schedules; that such schedules do not solve the problem of production and yet are costly because of overtime pay.

At least a third of the shipyards allowed but 15, 20, or 25 minutes for lunch. Many yards did not maintain facilities that were adequate even for a 30-minute period.

There were women on two shifts in more than a fourth of the yards and on all three shifts in more than half. Night work is an unnatural arrangement for anyone, and may be especially trying for women with home duties. For night work as well as for heavy and hazardous work, women should be carefully selected, with their strength and stability and their home problems in mind. A period of from 2 to 3 months on the night shift is within the limits most frequently recommended, yet few of the yards provided for a rotation of shifts.

The success of women in certain departments in a number of shipyards indicates that their continued employment might well be advantageous to the industry. They have proved very satisfactory in toolrooms. They have learned the work quickly, are orderly and efficient, and have more patience than men. In one yard the toolroom served a thousand people a day. The women waited on them and got them away from the window much faster than men.

Once a week files were gone through and misfiled slips pulled out. Formerly there would be a peach basket full of such slips; now with women on this job, there are only about 15 slips incorrectly filed. Girls spell and write better and are more accurate and serious about the work.

A number of establishments commented on women's proficiency in the sheet-metal shop. In one it was stated that production on light work increased by 20 percent after women were employed. They also stored the finished work and kept the warehouse in good order. In another, very few jobs were found that women could not do.

Women in one yard picked up burning more quickly than men and could change from machine to hand work. Men had been transferred to the outside and women kept in the shop. The supervisor had to be on the ship part of the time, but found that the women worked steadily when left alone. In another yard the instructor of a group of women on burning said they frequently were more accurate and careful than men.

The personnel manager of one shipyard said that women make good welders, and anticipated that eventually all their welders would be women. In another yard it was stated that women take to welding and are better than men.

In contemplating the finished ship, a visitor is likely to overlook the many small parts that go into it. There is inside work in electrical, optical, sheet-metal, and machine-shop jobs, no more difficult than that in similar jobs in aircraft plants, for example. Women assemble valves, couplings, water pumps, manifolds, locks, switchboards, various electrical equipment, and so on. They do the usual bench work, such as filing, burring, and hand forming.

Details of women's employment in 24 yards show that more than a third were in the shipfitting departments, one-seventh were in the machine departments, and about a tenth were in the electrical and in the service and maintenance departments. Smaller proportions were found in 10 other departments.

Seniority Holds in Akron Rubber Industry

In rubber—unlike industries which experienced wartime conversion—little change in plant organization was required a recent survey shows. Peacetime department seniority arrangements were continued with slight modification. Any worker's right to retain his job during lay-offs or to be rehired afterwards depends mainly on length of his company service compared with that of other workers in his department.

Seniority accumulates during military service—interpretation differing on relative reemployment rights of veterans and nonveterans of greater seniority. Agreements do not stipulate promotion by seniority but advancement to more desirable jobs is based on length of service and ability to learn the job.

In several plants senior workers claim specific jobs within their department; however preferential job assignment is not officially endorsed by union or management.

Employment and Weekly Pay Rolls

The total number of employees in nonagricultural establishments was 38,771,000 in August, 47,000 more than in July but a million less than a year ago. A seasonal expansion in several manufacturing industries coupled with the addition of 36,000 workers to Federal, State, and local governments accounted for this gain over the month.

MANUFACTURING

Wage-earner employment in all manufacturing industries increased 70,000 in August in spite of a decrease of 19,000 in the durable goods group. This decline reflects a cut-back of 34,000 in the transportation equipment group which was partly offset by increased production in the automobile industry, in the bag and shell loading industry of the iron and steel group, and by a seasonal increase in the lumber group.

The nondurable goods group showed a gain of 89,000 wage earners in August. The addition of 75,000 workers to the canning industry in the food group was almost wholly responsible for this increase. The chemicals group reported a gain of 4,000 employees, reflecting an increase in the production of smokeless powder.

Average hourly earnings in July were higher in June, since firms in operation on the holiday paid time and one-half. Yet weekly earnings dropped 75 cents below the June level. Reports showed that the average work-week was shorter in July in both durable and nondurable goods groups, accounting for the drop in weekly earnings. However, the tobacco and petroleum groups showed an increase in weekly pay of 22 cents and 83 cents respectively. Their work weeks remained unchanged.

NONMANUFACTURING

The average weekly earnings in the mining industries showed a considerable drop from June to July. Earnings in the anthracite, bituminous, and metal mining groups showed respective drops of $3.88, $4.96, and $1.68. However, their work weeks were shortened in July, partly because of of the observance of the holiday but chiefly because of the occurrence of strikes.

Estimated number of wage earners and average weekly earnings in manufacturing industries by major industry groups

[Adjusted to Bureau of Employment Security final data for 1941 and preliminary data for the second quarter of 1942]

Industry group	Estimated number of wage earners (thousands)			Average weekly earnings		
	August 1944	July 1944	August 1943	July 1944	June 1944	July 1943
ALL MANUFACTURING	**13,001**	**12,931**	**13,990**	**$45.52**	**$46.27**	**$42.76**
Durable goods	*7,715*	*7,734*	*8,321*	*51.20*	*52.17*	*48.76*
Iron and steel and their products	1,663	1,657	1,718	50.01	50.68	47.09
Electrical machinery	719	720	717	47.25	47.99	44.81
Machinery, except electrical	1,154	1,161	1,251	53.39	55.10	51.13
Transportation equipment, except automobiles	1,998	2,032	2,304	59.30	59.68	55.88
Automobiles	691	681	714	57.02	58.39	57.18
Nonferrous metals and their products	380	379	415	48.65	49.37	46.79
Lumber and timber basic products	438	431	482	33.73	35.56	31.51
Furniture and finished lumber products	341	340	362	35.65	36.36	32.48
Stone, clay, and glass products	331	333	358	38.14	39.21	35.49
Nondurable goods	*5,286*	*5,197*	*5,669*	*37.07*	*37.35*	*34.01*
Textile mill products and other fiber manufactures	1,083	1,089	1,204	29.63	29.87	27.16
Apparel and other finished textile products	762	747	834	29.27	29.95	26.16
Leather and leather products	307	307	325	32.90	33.39	29.09
Food	1,127	1,052	1,097	38.50	39.08	35.40
Tobacco manufactures	83	83	88	30.04	29.82	27.41
Paper and allied products	303	303	315	38.72	39.24	35.55
Printing, publishing, and allied industries	332	333	337	44.18	44.37	40.08
Products of petroleum and coal	135	134	127	56.09	55.26	51.14
Chemicals and allied products	588	584	741	44.37	44.27	42.13
Rubber products	191	190	194	49.12	49.30	44.94
Miscellaneous industries	375	375	407	43.23	44.18	40.17

Estimated number of wage earners and average weekly earnings in selected nonmanufacturing industries

Industry group	Estimated number of wage earners (thousands)			Average weekly earnings			Industry group	Estimated number of wage earners (thousands)			Average weekly earnings		
	August 1944 [1]	July 1944	August 1943	July 1944	June 1944	July 1943		August 1944 [1]	July 1944	August 1943	July 1944	June 1944	July 1943
Anthracite mining	64.4	64.5	70.3	$43.22	$47.10	$39.69	Electric light and power [2]	202	203	210	$48.12	$48.42	$44.86
Bituminous coal mining	352	351	376	47.31	52.27	42.76	Street railways and busses [2]	231	230	228	48.12	48.19	44.30
Metalliferous mining	75.6	77.3	93.1	43.44	45.12	43.36	Hotels (year-round) [2]	351	352	348	22.64	22.62	20.14
Iron	27.3	27.4	33.0	40.84	42.61	41.00	Power laundries	247	253	257	27.19	26.84	23.79
Copper	23.8	25.2	29.0	44.98	46.07	46.51	Dyeing and cleaning	80.1	82.6	80.6	31.08	31.37	27.55
Lead and zinc	15.4	15.5	18.2	44.88	46.67	42.47							
Gold and silver	5.6	5.7	6.4	40.21	43.75	39.91							
Miscellaneous	3.5	3.5	6.5	47.81	49.71	44.48							

[1] Preliminary.

[2] Includes salaried personnel.

Public Employment

Total employment of the Navy Department declined in August 1944 for the first time since April 1938. The decrease was owing to the completion of some construction work outside continental United States; Navy employment within continental United States continued upwards with an increase of 5,000. Employment of the War Department, although increasing 7,000 in August 1944, showed a net decline of 58,000 from August 1943 to August 1944.

Increases which occurred in agencies other than the war agencies were mainly in the Post Office Department (9,000), Agriculture and Interior Departments and Veterans Administration (1,000 each). The Inland Waterways Corporation, previously reported as a Government corporation, is included with data for the Commerce Department for the first time in August 1944 and accounts for the entire increase of 2,000 in Commerce Department employment.

The total of 3,326,000 employees in the entire Federal executive service in August 1944 was 20,000 higher than in July and 40,000 higher than a year ago. From July to August 1944, war agencies gained 5,000 employees and other agencies 14,000.

Employment on Federally financed construction projects, including war production facilities, declined 6,000 in August. Slight seasonal increases on the construction of streets and highways water and sewer systems, and miscellaneous projects, were more than offset by declines on other types of projects, which were small, except for nonresidential buildings where completions were an important factor during August.

Employment on shipbuilding and repair work financed by the Federal Government totalled 1,530,000 in August 1944. Of the decline of 32,000 during the month 2,000 was in navy yards and 30,000 in private shipyards. Although the Pacific region showed the greatest numerical decrease (8,000), greater relative decreases occurred in all of the other regions. However, the Pacific region showed the greatest relative decline over the year—13 percent.

Employment and pay rolls on construction projects financed wholly or partially from Federal funds August 1944 [1]

[In thousands]

Type of project	Employment	Pay rolls
Total	215.7	$41,902
Airports	18.8	3,170
Buildings:		
Residential	21.8	4,708
Nonresidential [2]	111.0	21,763
Electrification	.4	78
Reclamation	13.9	3,041
River, harbor, and flood control	19.8	3,854
Streets and highways	17.5	3,102
Water and sewer systems	6.7	1,063
Miscellaneous	5.8	1,123

[1] Data are for non-site employment and pay rolls within continental United States. Includes 38,400 force-account workers employed directly by the Federal Government who are also included in data for the executive branch.

[2] Includes 31,700 employees and $7,073,000 pay rolls for the Defense Plant Corporation (RFC).

Employment and pay rolls of the United States Government by branch, August 1944

[In thousands]

Branch	Employment	Pay rolls
Executive [1]	3,325.8	$712,592
War agencies	2,482.2	543,959
Continental United States	2,112.4	(2)
Outside continental United States	369.8	(2)
Other agencies	843.6	168,633
Continental United States	828.7	(2)
Outside continental United States	14.9	(2)
Judicial	2.7	784
Legislative	6.2	1,528

[1] Includes 38,400 force-account workers employed directly by the Federal Government who are also included under construction projects.

[2] Break-down not available.

Total employment and pay rolls in United States Navy Yards and private shipyards by shipbuilding region, August 1944

[In thousands]

Shipbuilding region	Employment	Pay rolls
All regions	1,529.5	$426,185
United States navy yards [1]	324.0	89,019
Private shipyards	1,205.5	337,166
North Atlantic	552.5	(2)
South Atlantic	135.0	(2)
Gulf	207.7	(2)
Pacific	513.2	(2)
Great Lakes	58.9	(2)
Inland	62.2	(2)

[1] Covers all navy yards within continental United States constructing or repairing ships, including the Curtis Bay (Md.) coast guard yard.

[2] Data by region not available.

Cost of Living in August 1944

Higher prices for clothing and seasonally higher prices for eggs were chiefly responsible for the 0.2 percent increase in average retail prices of living essentials between mid-July and mid-August.

During the 5 years of the war in Europe, prices of goods important in the purchases of moderate-income families have increased 28 percent, contrasted to the 73 percent rise in the corresponding period in 1914–19. About one-tenth of the advance during the present war has occurred in the year ending August 15, 1944.

During the month ending in mid-August, average prices of all major groups of foods except eggs either decreased or remained unchanged, but the 7 percent seasonal advance in egg prices more than offset these other declines in the cost of foods. In the 56 cities surveyed in August, egg prices ranged from 35 cents to 69 cents, and on the average showed an advance of about 4 cents over July prices.

Fresh fruits and vegetables showed the greatest decrease over the month. Seasonal declines of 19 percent in the price of apples, approximately 10 percent for onions, and 9 percent for sweet potatoes were not offset by increases for green beans, cabbage, spinach, carrots, lettuce, and white potatoes. With the exception of eggs and fruits and vegetables, all other food groups included in the index showed only minor changes. Declines in beef and pork prices, unusual at this time of year, together with a 1 percent decrease in prices of roasting chickens, resulted in a slight drop for meats and fish as a group.

Changes in food prices between mid-July and mid-August showed considerable variation between cities, ranging from a decrease of 2.5 percent to an advance of 3.2 percent. In the South Atlantic and East and West South Central cities, food prices generally advanced, due to large seasonal increases in prices of eggs and fruits and vegetables, while decreases were reported in all cities surveyed in the West North Central and Mountain regions.

Higher prices for women's winter cloth coats were chiefly accountable for the 0.7 percent rise in clothing costs between mid-July and mid-August. The increase in the Federal excise tax on furs, which became effective during the spring, contributed to the advance for fur-trimmed coats, and disappearance of lower-price lines, especially of untrimmed sport coats, was also a factor. Retailers generally reported that the quality of woolen fabrics in this year's coats is better than last year. Small increases for some other clothing resulted primarily from unavailability of the lower-priced lines.

The present cigarette shortage is reflected in price advances in several cities, as more retailers limited sales to one pack to a customer, thus removing the saving resulting from purchases of two packs at a time. Newspaper prices in New York City went up. Scattered increases in house furnishings brought average costs of this group in the family budget up 0.1 percent above the level of July 15. Fuel, electricity and ice charges on the average remained unchanged.

Rents are surveyed only during the quarterly months of March, June, September, and December, and are not available for August.

Cost of living in 21 large cities

Area and city	Index as of Aug. 15, 1944; 1935–39 = 100	Percent of change from—		
		July 15, 1944, to Aug. 15, 1944	Aug. 15, 1943, to Aug. 15, 1944	Aug. 15, 1939, to Aug. 15, 1944
Average: Large Cities	**126.3**	**+0.2**	**+2.4**	**+28.1**
North Atlantic:				
Boston	122.8	+.3	+2.3	+26.5
Buffalo	126.2	−.2	+.6	+28.1
New York	127.1	+.6	+3.5	+28.4
Philadelphia	125.5	+.5	+.5	+28.3
Pittsburgh	127.8	+.8	+3.2	+29.9
South Atlantic:				
Baltimore	128.6	+.2	+2.4	+30.3
Savannah	135.5	+.6	+2.6	+36.5
Washington, D. C.	124.9	+.5	+1.5	+26.7
North Central:				
Chicago	125.6	−.4	+2.2	+27.3
Cincinnati	126.4	−.5	+1.9	+29.9
Cleveland	130.3	0	+1.8	+30.3
Detroit	127.3	−.4	+2.2	+29.2
Kansas City	123.9	−.2	+2.6	+25.7
Minneapolis	122.8	−.2	+1.7	+23.2
St. Louis	124.9	−.5	+1.8	+27.3
South Central:				
Birmingham	131.8	+1.2	+4.1	+33.8
Houston	124.7	+.2	+2.2	+23.8
Western:				
Denver	124.7	−1.0	+3.0	+26.5
Los Angeles	127.6	+.9	+2.3	+27.0
San Francisco	129.4	+.1	+4.1	+30.3
Seattle	129.6	+.1	+3.0	+29.2

The BLS index indicates average changes in retail prices of selected goods, rents, and services bought by families of wage earners and lower-salaried workers in large cities. The items covered represented 70 percent of the expenditures of families who had incomes ranging from $1,250 to $2,000 in 1934–36.

The index does not show the full wartime effect on the cost of living of such factors as lowered quality, disappearance of low-priced goods and forced changes in housing and eating away from home.

It does not measure changes in *total* "living costs"—that is, *in the total amount families spend for living.* Income taxes and bond subscriptions are not included.

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